

**Child Support Advisory Board**  
**MINUTES**  
**July 17, 2003**

**Present**

1<sup>st</sup> District, George Gliaudys, Jr., Esq.  
2<sup>nd</sup> District, Paula G. Leftwich  
2<sup>nd</sup> District, John Murrell  
3<sup>rd</sup> District, Lucy T. Eisenberg, Esq.  
3<sup>rd</sup> District, Betty Nordwind  
5<sup>th</sup> District, Reginald Brass  
5<sup>th</sup> District, Susan Speir

**Absent**

1<sup>st</sup> District, Jane Preece, Esq.  
4<sup>th</sup> District, Jean F. Cohen  
4<sup>th</sup> District, Maria Tortorelli  
  
Franchise Tax Board, Debbie Strong  
CA Department of Child Support Services,  
Nancy Stone

Chief Information Office,  
Earl Bradley  
Department of Public Social Services,  
Rosie Ruiz  
Child Support Services Department,  
Philip Browning  
Superior Court, David Jetton

**Guests**

Steven Golightly, CSSD  
Lori Cruz, CSSD  
Julie Paik, CSSD  
Lisa Garrett, CSSD

Carol Mentell, CSSD  
Leora Gershenzon, CDCSS  
Lawrence Hill, SEIU Local 660

**Staff Support**

Lee Millen, Board of Supervisors  
Peter Papadakis, Board of Supervisors

**CALL TO ORDER**

*Chairperson Eisenberg* called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2003**

On motion of Vice Chair Speir, seconded by Member Leftwich and unanimously carried, the minutes of June 26, 2003 were approved with the following corrections:

Page 3: CSI Update; "About 81% ~~49%~~ of the total cases ..."; Page 4: PRU Reports; "...the MCC ~~MCC~~ Log and the Audit tracking ..."; and Attendance: Barbara Abrams, DCFS ~~Patti Griffin~~

### **Board Chair's Report**

Following discussion, on motion of Chairperson Eisenberg, seconded by Vice Chair Speir and unanimously carried, the CSAB agreed to continue to meet at the CSSD Headquarters' meeting room.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

*Philip Browning, Director, CSSD, reported the following:*

- 100 temporary employees were released last month, 99 layoff notices are to be given today and are effective the end of July 2003, and about 90 to 100 employees will be reduced in rank. The Board of Supervisors was notified on July 1, 2003 regarding the necessary reduction in staff due to the existing \$10.6 million allocation reduction by the State for this fiscal year;
- The DCSS has authorized the use of \$1.3 million of Health Incentive Funds, and recent savings by the District Attorney's termination of the TP270 agreement and the reduction of a mailing agreement with the Treasurer Tax Collector's Office, have resulted in an increase of \$4.1 million in revenue. As a result, the Board of Supervisors has been notified that about 107 staff cuts will not be necessary;
- About 253 staff attended the July 15, 2003 Board of Supervisors' meeting and made four presentations regarding the impact of the state allocation shortage on CSSD operations. However, the Board of Supervisors is not in a position to put county money into a state run program;
- There are a group of attorneys working on a proposed work furlough to mitigate the further reduction of legal staff;
- A Town Hall meeting with about 400 staff was held recently to improve communication between and management and staff, and inquiries included the budget shortfall, the impending layoffs and the ongoing search for additional funding sources to mitigate layoffs;
- Expenditures for last fiscal year were 99% of a budget of \$151 million; the current budget reduction of \$10.6 million will significantly impact operations;

In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, Member Browning noted that a new organizational chart reflecting staff layoffs is not available as yet; however, the CSAB will be provided next month with an organizational chart that reflects staff cuts. The staff cuts have primarily occurred with intermediate clerks and entry level staff positions, including Policy, Training and Staff Development, Research and Development and the Call Center.

- The CDCSS has implemented a Phase I corrective process and Leora Gershenzon will visit the office this month to assess the progress made in complying with the Performance Improvement Program (PIP) and recommended performance improvements; the PIP's recommendations include the redesign of the CSSD's business plan. The CAO has been asked to identify an experienced staff member who can assist the CSSD in this regard, however, staff recommends that it would be more practical to initially effect a reorganizational pilot program change in a Division;

- The backlog of about 14,000 unopened cases due to a prioritization on current collections is almost complete;
- About \$6 million in uncashed checks was identified; however, about \$1 million will be distributed at the end of July 2003 to CP's with updated addresses. Checks returned to CSSD count against current collections and staff has begun contacting recipients of the largest uncashed checks on file; and
- A web link to interface with the Auditor Controller's office is being developed to enable CSSD staff and CP's to determine the status of distributed checks.

Chairperson Eisenberg requested a report in three months regarding the percentage of uncashed checks distributed and cashed, and a status report on the interface with the Auditor Controller's Office.

### **REVIEW AND DISCUSS MONTHLY REPORTS/PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Chairperson Eisenberg thanked staff on the improvement of the Order Calculation Method Percentages graph and for providing the Division's Performance Measurement tracking graph. Also, the monthly Division Inventory Report is available today and will be included in next month's mailing for Members to discuss the possible inclusion on a continuing basis. Leora Gershenzon, DCSS, noted that 26% reserved orders for June 2003 seems fairly high; Member Browning noted that this data reflects modifications. Also, Lisa Garrett, CSSD, noted that staff provided Written Correspondence from NCP/CP/OJ for CSAB review to determine whether it should be included in the monthly reports.

Member Nordwind noted that a backlog of complaints shows a customer service negative trend; 275 additional complaints were received for May 2003 adding to the balance of 927 total complaints pending. Vice Chair Speir expressed concern that when a CP reapplies for welfare and had a reserved order, it takes about a year and a half to modify that order. Lori Cruz, Deputy Director, CSSD, advised that a greater emphasis on modifications should address this concern and is key in increasing collections.

Chairperson Eisenberg requested that next month's monthly report include data on Written Correspondence and the Division Inventory Report.

### **CSI UPDATE**

Lori Cruz reported that a 38% current support collections rate was achieved, however, \$3.1 million was received back into the system due to uncashed checks and reduced the year to date collection rate to about 35% and the monthly rate to 32%. There were 9,500 case modifications in June 2003, 3,000 modifications in July 2003, and it is anticipated that 1,000 modifications will occur in August 2003 which will meet the imposed state deadline for modifications on case backlogs. Case clean up is continuing for errors in case opening and conversions from the former data system. Also, there are plans to extend CSI into next federal fiscal year in that it has proven to increase current support collections.

In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, Ms. Cruz reported that a review of modifications has a smaller acceptance rate than CSI case work attempted. The Court has agreed to include the modification process in their court processing and CSSD staff is drafting process guidelines; to date staff has completed 24 thousand modification orders. Ms. Gershenzon advised that when the state adopts its budget there will be a provision allowing CSSD agencies to proactively initiate case modifications. Chairperson Eisenberg requested that the monthly report next month include CSI charts.

In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, Member Browning agreed to provide an updated listing of budgeted personnel items at the next CSAB meeting. In response to Member Gliaudys, Member Browning advised that the majority of the 99 layoffs are from support units and not from federally required positions. Also, in response to Member Nordwind, Member Browning agreed to provide the Customer Service Committee with a list of staff cuts in customer service oriented positions and a history of staff levels in these positions. In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, a staff report on CSSD staff levels in a given month compared to post layoff staff levels will be presented at the next CSAB meeting. Member Murrell concurred that staff cuts and their impact overall should be measured versus restricting the analysis to only customer service cuts.

### **REPORT ON STATE HEARING DIVISION OPERATIONS**

Julie Paik, Deputy Director, CSSD, reported on the history, purpose and staffing in the State Hearing Division. Staffing is now complete and is supervised by Emy Tzimoulis, Division Chief. CSSD has centralized the complaint resolution and state hearing process, uniform procedures have been created and the operation has run successfully. The operation began on December 2, 2002 and a few months ago six Ombudsman personnel were reassigned to assist staff in working on about 1,200 backlog cases; there are currently less than 1,000 backlogged cases and the six staff recently returned to their unit to work on the case opening project.

As a result of the PIP and working with the Customer Service Committee, the voice mail message was modified on the IDR deleting references to an invitation to callers to utilize the complaint resolution process; this has resulted in a decrease in complaint filing requests. Vice Chair Speir noted that decreases in complaints are probably due to Call Center staff not advising callers about the written complaint process, and Member Nordwind noted that the decrease in complaints predates the change in the IDR voice message. Ms. Gershenzon advised that notices sent to CP's or NCP's include an alert regarding their right to the complaint resolution process and the state hearing.

Ms. Paik reported that budgetary constraints have caused the elimination of five state hearing specialists in the State Hearing Division, and as a result, the Division will now handle only complaints and staff attorneys in other divisions will handle state hearings.

Discussion ensued on specific cases that included complaints that were not addressed appropriately or in a timely manner. Member Nordwind noted that the Call Center began its operations making referrals to the Ombudsman Office and currently seems to have slowed this practice considerably; she has contacted Mr. DeGruccio, Call Center, to develop a matrix that would offer guidance to staff regarding appropriate referrals.

In response to Vice Chair Speir, Ms. Paik advised that there are three attorneys in the State Hearing Division reviewing every complaint and every state hearing request to identify any systemic issues; cases identified would be referred to the Policy Division or to Ms. Paik for appropriate corrective action. In response to Vice Chair Speir, Ms. Paik noted that there is a follow-up on case resolutions. Chairperson Eisenberg requested that Ms. Tzimoulis present a status report in the near future to the CSAB on the follow-up process.

In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, Ms. Paik noted that of 661 cases reviewed, 8% were granted outright to the litigant. Ms. Gershenzon advised that the goal is to resolve the complaint at the local level and not in a state hearing. Following discussion, Chairperson Eisenberg requested that Ms. Gershenzon provide her with documented analysis on state hearing decisions on any given month as it relates to Los Angeles County, and that Gail Juiliano, CSSD, provide an analysis on the same to determine whether this issue should be discussed further at a future CSAB meeting.

**SYSTEMIC ISSUES: Discuss documents included in mailing for May 2003 Meeting, and Vice Chair Speir's memo regarding Morales**

Following discussion, Chairperson Eisenberg requested that this agenda item be deferred to next month. Staff will include the May 2003 systemic issues report and the Morales fact sheet in next month's mailing.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Customer Service Committee**

Chair Nordwind reported briefly on the Committee's history, purpose, membership and work in progress. The CSAB was invited to attend the next Committee meeting on October 14, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. in CSSD headquarters.

**Welfare/DPSS Interface**

Chairperson Eisenberg reported that this newly formed Committee has not met as yet, however, the DPSS and CSSD interface remains a priority study. Mr. Golightly, Chief Deputy, CSSD, reported that a meeting was held on July 16, 2003 of CSSD and DPSS senior management to discuss automation issues affecting child support operations. It was agreed that monies thought to be on reserve in Sacramento to implement Leader corrections does not exist, however, DPSS has identified funds and has committed to implement specific system corrections by August 22, 2003.

The two major issues addressed were the link between ARS and Leader regarding welfare cases and the transmittal of current/accurate information on applicants for aid, and a DPSS policy change to not open or approve cases for aid unless the NCP is identified on the welfare file. It is anticipated that this link will improve CSSD file updates and IT staff will add on an alert under CSSD case tasking when the CP has provided updated information. Also, staff is working to resolve problems with the single index

system and it is anticipated that the new link should resolve this concern. Further, DPSS provided 20 computer work stations to CSSD staff which will provide Leader access.

Chairperson Eisenberg commended Vice Chair Speir for raising five important issues that the Welfare Committee will be addressing (copy on file); the Committee will meet in October 2003. Vice Chair Speir noted that communication between DPSS and CSSD staff has improved, DPSS is genuinely interested in addressing CSSD concerns, and CSSD staff should have been proactive by alerting DPSS staff regarding systemic issues she has repeatedly expressed concern about. Mr. Golightly noted that staff will report back on whether issues raised by Vice Chair Speir are in fact continuing to occur.

Ms. Paik announced that the Board of Supervisors will be presenting CSSD with a Resolution proclaiming August 2003 Child Awareness Month and CSAB members will be forwarded an invitation to attend. Also, Members are invited to attend scheduled CSSD activities during August 2003.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.